

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

In the following claims, which include all the claims in this application, claims 1 and 7 are amended.

1. (currently amended) A method for equalizing temperature differences in molten glass in at least one temperature equalization zone that is in the form of side walls, a bottom wall, and a roof that define a channel to transport a glass melt, wherein the equalization zone is located upstream from a tap-off point at which the glass is tapped into a mold in a forming machine or the like, said method comprising the steps of: providing resistor heating elements in within the interior of each of the temperature equalization zone side walls, bottom wall, and roof; measuring the temperatures of surfaces within the interior of the respective side walls, bottom wall, and roof that are contacted by the resistor heating elements; and controlling the resistor heating elements by an electric controller so that the temperatures of said wall surfaces within the interior of the respective walls are substantially equal to a predetermined tapping temperature of the glass melt.

2. (previously amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, including the step of spacing the resistor heating elements at substantially regular intervals along the temperature equalization zone.

3. (previously amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, including the step of measuring the temperatures of the surfaces of the respective side walls,

bottom wall, and roof that are in contact with the resistor heating elements as the temperatures of the respective resistor heating elements.

4. (previously amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, including the step of forming the channel walls from a ceramic material, wherein the resistor heating elements include spiral elements carried in ceramic tubes mounted on an outer surface of the ceramic material that forms said channel walls.

5. (previously amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, including the step of forming the channel walls from a ceramic material, wherein the resistor heating elements include band-shaped resistor heating elements mounted on an outer surface of the ceramic material that forms said channel walls.

6. (previously amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, including the step of forming the temperature equalization zone to have a length corresponding to at least 1-2 times the width of said channel.

7. (currently amended) Apparatus for equalizing temperature differences in molten glass in at least one temperature equalization zone that is in the form of a channel to transport a glass melt, wherein the equalization zone is located upstream from a tap-off point at which the glass melt is tapped into a mold in a

forming machine or the like, said apparatus comprising: a plurality of resistor heating elements disposed ~~in~~ within the interior of each of the temperature equalization zone side walls, bottom wall, and roof; thermocouples provided on the surfaces within the interior of the respective side walls, bottom wall, and roof that are in contact with said resistor heating elements for measuring channel surface temperatures; and an electric controller for controlling said resistor heating elements so that the temperatures of said wall surfaces within the interior of the respective walls are substantially equal to a predetermined tapping temperature of the glass melt.

8. (previously amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 7, wherein the resistor heating elements are spaced at substantially regular intervals along the temperature equalization zone.

9. (previously amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 7, wherein the channel walls are formed from a ceramic material, and wherein the resistor heating elements include spiral elements carried in ceramic tubes mounted on an outer surface of the ceramic material that forms said channel walls.

10. (previously amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 7, wherein the channel walls are formed from a ceramic material, and wherein the resistor heating elements include band-shaped resistor heating elements mounted on an outer surface of the ceramic material that forms said channel walls.

11. (previously amended) Apparatus in accordance with claim 7, wherein the temperature equalization zone has a length corresponding to at least 1-2 times the width of said channel.